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# the X-MEN

WHO DARES DEFY-- THE DEMI-MEN?

SIERANKO

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X-MEN! THE MOST UNUSUAL FIGHTING TEAM OF ALL TIME!™

# WHO DARES DEFY... The DEMI-MEN?

EERIE FEELING-- RETURNING TO THE HOUSE THAT WAS OUR HEADQUARTERS! THE BUSTLING BASE FOR X-MEN TRAINING AND SURVIVAL SESSIONS--
--NOW JUST A STORE-HOUSE OF FOND MEMORIES AND REGRETS! THE PROFESSOR DEAD-- AND THE GROUP DIS-BANDED--
--IT'S LIKE LEAFING THROUGH A DUSTY FAMILY ALBUM--PAGES FROM A HAPPIER TIME! BUT I HAD TO SEE IT ONCE MORE!
FLY RIGHT IN, ANGEL! BUT THE PRICE OF THIS SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY MAY PROVE MORE FEARFUL THAN FORLORN--!

X-TATICALLY PRESENTED BY- STAN LEE
X-CITINGLY WRITTEN BY- ARNOLD DRAKE
X-HUBERANTLY DESIGNED BY- DON HECK
X-TRAORDINARILY DRAWN BY- WERNER ROTH
X-QUISITELY INKED BY- JOHN TARTAGLIONE
X-ECRABLY LETTERED BY- HERB COOPER

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STRANGE FEELING-- TO LOOK AT A *HOUSE* THAT WAS ONCE *ALIVE* WITH EVERYTHING YOU *LOVED* AND *RESPECTED*, AND FIND--

--ONLY A *SUITE* OF MUSTY, SHROUDED SILENT *RECOLLEC-TIONS!*

IF A GUY COULD ONLY PUT *FLESH* ON THOSE SPECTRES, *TRANSFUSE* SOME BLOOD INTO THOSE REMEMBRANCES--

TICKA! TICKA! TICKA!

*HOLD IT!* THAT NOISE-- SOME KIND OF *MACHINE*-- AND NOT A *GHOST* MACHINE! BUT WE *SHUT DOWN* EVERYTHING!

THE ONLY *TENANTS* LEFT HERE ARE THE *GHOSTS* OF---A *THOUSAND YESTERDAYS!*

TICKA! TICKA! TICKA!

AND THE PROFESSOR'S *TOP SECRET* EQUIPMENT IS ALL UNDER LOCK AND KEY HERE! YET--

THERE'S *NOT* THAT *NOISE!* AND IT'S FOR--*REAL!* GOTTA *FIND* IT!

TICKA!

SHEESH! I FEEL LIKE-- "*NANCY DREW* IN THE *MAD LABORATORY* AT *HAPPY VALLEY!*"

*AHHHH!* *THERE'S* THE LITTLE *DOLL!* AND NOW I UNDERSTAND HOW IT STARTED *TICKING* AGAIN!

TICKA!

IT'S *CEREBRO*-- PROF. XAVIER'S MACHINE FOR DETECTING *ACTIVE MUTANTS!* AND THERE'S AN *EMERGENCY* CIRCUIT THAT--

--TURNS ITSELF ON WHEN IT *SENSES* EMERGING *MUTANT ENERGY! HOOOEEE!* ACCORDING TO THIS--

--THERE'S THE SINGLE *HIGHEST* RECORDED CONCENTRATION OF MUTANTS ON THE *MOVE* RIGHT NOW!

MUST *CONTACT* THE OTHER X-MEN AT *ONCE!* I'LL TRY *MARVEL GIRL'S* NEW *PSYCHIC POWERS!* I KNOW SHE CAN PICK UP MY *THOUGHT WAVES,* BUT--

--CAN SHE *HOOK* US ALL TOGETHER LIKE A *CONFERENCE PHONE CALL?* WELL--

--*GOTTA* GIVE IT A TRY! CONCENTRATE-- *HARDER-- HARDER!*

CAN YOU *READ* ME, *JEAN?*

I READ YOU *STRONG* AND *CLEAR, WARREN!*

AND I'M *HOOKING* IN *SCOTT,* OVER AT HIS RADIO STUDIO! THEN I'LL TRY *HANK* AND *BOBBY!*

NEWS ROOM

COME ON, *HANK*--YOU'VE GOT A HIGH *PSYCHIC AGENCY!* WHY DON'T YOU *READ* ME?

I KNOW YOU'RE *3,000 MILES* AWAY-- BUT *THAT'S* NOT THE OBSTACLE! THEN *WHAT--?*

MAYBE IT'S THE *FACT* THAT RIGHT NOW HANK AND BOBBY ARE ALSO *TWO MILES STRAIGHT UP* AND *SLIGHTLY* BUSY--

*EYAAA!*

WHEN BOBBY SAID HE'D ARRANGED A CLEVER NEW *COVER* JOB FOR US--HE DIDN'T MENTION THERE WAS A *SLIGHT* OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD!

HE BILLED US AS THE *DANGER TWINS!* I MIGHT HAVE PREFERRED SOMETHING LESS *BRASH*-- LIKE, THE *DAUNTLESS DUO* OR--

*HANK!* THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! *ANSWER!*

AS THE CALL *DIVERTS* HANK'S ATTENTION, BOBBY *STARES* IN DISBELIEF...

THE *DOPE!* WHY DOESN'T HE *HIT THE SILK? OPEN* YOUR CHUTE, HANK-BUDDY! *COME ON!* YOU'LL BE EATING *DIRT* IN ANOTHER *30 SECONDS!*

*HUH?!*

IT'S *JEAN! SORRY*-- SKY DIVING! DIDN'T GET YOUR *FIRST* ALERT!

*EYOW!*

*DELAYED* PULLING THE CORD--AND NOW IT *CAN'T* BE TOTALLY EFFECTIVE! I'M GOING TO MAKE AN *AWFUL* STAIN ON THE LANDSCAPE--!

*FEAR NOT, BEAST!* THE OLD ICEMAN IS STILL HERE! I'LL FASHION A SET OF GIANT *TONGS* AND--

*GOTCHYA!*

END OF THE *LINE, BUBIE!* YOU'LL BE *BRUISED*--BUT *UNBROKEN!*

HANK *RESPONDED* FOR A SECOND AND THEN I *LOST* CONTACT--

*WHY?*

*BA WUM P!*

MEANWHILE NOT FAR FROM THAT AERONAUTICAL EXTRAVAGANZA ATOP A GLOOMY SAN FRANCISCO HILL, A STRANGE MANSION--

--HIDES AN EVEN STRANGER GROUP OF TENANTS!

YOU ARE MY ELITE GUARD! WITH YOU TO LEAD THE OTHERS AGAINST THE COWARDLY, WEAK-LING FORCES OF NORMAL MEN--

--WE SHALL ACCOMPLISH THE GLORIOUS DESTINY OF--THE MUTANTS!

A DESTINY FORESEEN LONG AGO BY OUR GREAT AND GIFTED LEADER --MAGNETO!

ALL GLORY TO MAGNETO!

AND HIS NOBLE PUPIL-- MESMERO!

NOW THE *PSYCHE-GENERATOR* --BORN OF THE *GENIUS* OF MAGNETO--BOMBARDS MY *BRAIN* WITH ENERGY NEEDED--

--TO SEND MY *CLARION CALL* NEAR AND FAR! TO *ALERT* ALL *MUTANTS*, WHEREVER THEY BE--

--THAT *THEIR* DAY OF *GREATNESS* IS-- *AT HAND!*

*AWAKE!*

*AWAKE!*

*AWAKE!*

*AWAKE!*

*AWAKE!*

FROM *EVERY* COMPASS DIRECTION, ALL *POINTS* OF LIFE, THEY COME... AN ARMY OF *ALL-POWERFUL* HUMANS--*BLIND* TO THEIR OWN POWER!

FOR THESE ARE--THE *LATENT MUTANTS!*

THEY *COME!* BUT *YOU,* MY ELITE GUARD, MUST PATROL THE STREETS *AGAINST* THE COMING OF--

--THE ACCURSED *X-MEN!* FOR *THEY* TOO ARE *MUTANTS*--

--AND MAY SENSE THE *AWAKENING* OF OUR ARMY!

NOW, THE *DAWN* OF GREATNESS IS AT *HAND!* HOW I WISH--

--THAT MY GREAT *MASTER*--*MAGNETO*--WERE HERE TO *SHARE* IT WITH ME!

MEANWHILE, AS ONE OF THE *MINDLESS* ONES MARCHES FOWARD--

--AND THE EVENTS OF THE *NEXT* FEW SECONDS SPEAK FOR *THEMSELVES*--!

SKREE

WHERE *AM I?*

HOW DID I *GET* HERE?

--YOU SAY THIS IS SAN FRANCISCO? BUT THAT'S 1200 MILES FROM MY HOME! WHAT BROUGHT ME HERE?

I'M NOT SURE--BUT MY GUESS IS YOU'VE SUFFERED SOME TEMPORARY LOSS OF MEMORY, MISS --

--DANE--LORNA DANE!

CALL ME BOBBY, LADY! AND I THINK YOU NEED SOME REST! MY PAD'S NOT FAR FROM HERE! HOW ABOUT A HOT CUP OF JAVA?

I--I--I'M IN NO CONDITION TO REFUSE --EVEN IF I WANTED TO!

THE DEUCE! WHAT'S ICE DOING ON THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO?

MEANWHILE, AS ANGEL AND MARVEL GIRL SOAR ALOFT...

YOU REALLY OUGHT TO LEARN HOW TO FLY, CYKE! YOU'D SAVE A LOT ON TAXIS!

JUST HOLD TIGHT AND KEEP YOUR MIND ON YOUR WORK, ANGEL!

THE AVENGERS LENT ME THIS LITTLE SUPERSONIC JOB FOR LONG DISTANCE TRAVEL! HOP IN FRIENDS!

UP SHE GO-O-O-O-OES!

I THINK I FEEL SAFER WHEN YOU FLY WITHOUT A PLANE, CHUM!

AND, BACK AT BOBBY AND HANK'S PLACE...

HAVE YOU VACATED YOUR SENSES? BRINGING THAT GIRL HERE WHEN THE OTHER X-MEN ARE ABOUT TO ARRIVE?

I FORGOT, HANK--HONEST! DON'T WORRY, I'LL GET HER OUT OF HERE BEFORE--

--YOU'LL GET WHO OUT OF HERE?

SOUNDS LIKE JUNIOR'S BEEN PLAYING WITH FIRE--AGAIN!

ENTER, TRUE FRIENDS--AND MEET MY BLUNDERING ASSOCIATE--WHO'S NOT SUCH A BAD IDIOT WHEN YOU GET TO KNOW HIM!



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IT'S OKAY! LORNA IS FAST ASLEEP! THE POOR KID JUST HAD A BAD SHOCK!

THEN I'D SUGGEST WE FINISH OUR MEETING BEFORE THE POOR KID UNMASKS THE X-MEN!

SWIFTLY, THEY REVIEW THE FACTS...

--AND, WHILE CEREBRO FIXED THE APPROXIMATE DISTANCE AND DIRECTION, IT COULDN'T NARROW IT DOWN MUCH AT 3,000 MILES --

--SO WE'LL HAVE TO CONDUCT A BLIND SEARCH OF THE ENTIRE AREA!

MAYBE NOT! I'VE BE WORKING ON A MINIATURIZED CEREBRO-- A PORTABLE MUTANT DETECTOR!

IT'S CLOSE TO COMPLETION NOW-- JUST A FEW MINOR ADJUSTMENTS--

--THEN YOU FINISH IT OFF WHILE WE START SCOURING THE AREA! KEEP AN EYE ON LORNA WHILE YOU'RE AT IT!

METHINKS I DETECT A BUDDING ROMANCE --BUD!

OKAY, HOLD HER AT THIS ALTITUDE, ANGEL! I'LL TRY THE VIDEO-SCANNER NOW!

ROGER! THIS THING MANEUVERS BETTER THAN A MOTORBIKE!

AHH! WE'RE RUNNING IN LUCK! I'VE SPOTTED A MUTANT SQUAD!

THAT YOU CALL LUCKY--RUNNING INTO A BAND OF WAKING NIGHTMARES!

TAKE THE WHEEL, SCOTT! I'M GOING NIGHTMARE HUNTING!

THE X-MEN! MAGNETO WAS WISE TO ANTICIPATE THEIR COMING!

THEIR DESTRUCTION SHALL BE NO SMALL JOY--FOR IT WAS THEY WHO LONG HOUNDED OUR MIGHTY MAGNETO! DEATH TO THE -- X-MEN!

DON'T KNOW WHAT *KIND* OF MUTANTS THESE-- WHEN THEY DO ALL THEIR FIGHTING WITH *GUNS*-- BUT THIS IS NO TIME FOR *20 QUESTIONS!*

I'VE GOT ME *TWO* AT ONE TIME --AND WITH A LITTLE *RICOCHET LUCK* --THREE!

CRACK!

LET'S NOT COUNT OUR *CHICKENS* TILL WE'VE GOT THEM ALL *FRIED*, MY FRIEND!

WHOOSH!

NICE WORK, ICEMAN-- BUT--*LOOK OUT! BEHIND* YOU!

SPLAT!

KRZZ!

THE ONE THEY CALL *ANGEL* FIGHTS LIKE ALL THE *FURIES* COMBINED! BUT I HAVE HIM *NOW* WITHIN MY *GUNSIGHTS!*

GOT HIM! BUT HE WAS MUCH TOO CLOSE TO KILLING ANGEL FOR ANY COMFORT!

KWAM!

WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT COMFORT?

ARRRGH!

THEY JUST NEED A LITTLE MORE CONVINCING, IS ALL! LIKE THIS I-- =EAAARH!=

WE GOT THEM ALL, BUT--ANGEL! HE'S HIT! AND NOW, HE'S JUST LYING THERE--MOTIONLESS! IS HE--IS HE--?

ENJOY YOUR SMALL VICTORY, WINGED MAN! FOR IT WAS YOUR LAST!

GOOD THING I SPOTTED THIS ONE SLIPPING UP BEHIND ME! THEY DON'T GIVE UP EASILY!

AS THEY RACE TOWARD THEIR FALLEN COMRADE, EACH STEP SEEMS A THOUSAND YEARS...

HE'S COMING AROUND! HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, JEAN!

YES--BUT HE'S GOT A COUPLE OF BRUISES THAT HE'LL FEEL FOR A LONG WHILE!

THAT'S PAR FOR THE COURSE IN OUR TRADE!

I'M AFRAID SO! NOW YOU TWO HELP HIM BACK TO THE PLANE!

RIGHT! HANK SHOULD HAVE THAT MINI-CEREBRO WORKING BY NOW!

HMMM! EVERYTHING CHECKS OUT! NOW FOR AN OPERATIONAL TEST!

HUHHHH? IT'S PICKING UP A MUTANT-ENERGY IMPULSE ALREADY!

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

CLICK!

WHAT IN--? IT'S GETTING CLOSER-- AND CLOSER!

A NOISE--FROM THE NEXT ROOM! WHO IN THE NAME OF SANITY CAN IT BE?

HI, THERE! THOUGHT I'D SHOWER AND--

HOLD IT! YOU'RE NOT--BOBBY! AND THAT STRANGE COSTUME--?

GREETINGS, FAIR LADY! I'M A BOSOM COMPANION OF BOBBY'S--AND I'M ON MY WAY TO A COSTUME BALL!

NOW WHO ARE YOU--AND THAT GREEN HAIR

THAT'S MY LIFE-LONG SECRET! I WAS BORN THIS WAY!

I DYE IT TO AVOID ATTRACTING THE CURIOUS! BUT THE DYE WASHES OUT! Y-YOU'LL KEEP MY SECRET?

IT SHALL GO EVEN UNTO THE GRAVE WITH ME, M'LADY!

SHE'S OBVIOUSLY ANOTHER LATENT MUTANT--

--I'D BETTER KEEP HER HERE UNTIL THE OTHERS RETURN! THEN I CAN YELL-- SURPRISE!

WHEN WAS THE *LAST* TIME AN X-MAN WAS SURPRISED, HANK--?

--OBVIOUSLY, MISS DANE IS AN *UNCONSCIOUS* MUTANT, BROUGHT HERE WITH THE OTHERS BY SOME STRANGE *FORCE*--

--AND, IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SAY THAT *MAGNETO* WAS BEHIND IT ALL!

MUTANT POWER? MAGNETO? WHAT IS THIS *ALL ABOUT?*

MAGNETO WAS A *CHAMPION* OF EVIL-- DEVOTED TO OUR *DEMISE!*

BUT *HE* IS DEAD NOW! WE SAW HIM *DISAPPEAR* INTO... A WATERY GRAVE!* OR--*DID* WE?

*IF *YOU* DIDN'T SEE IT, TOO... IN *AVENGERS #53*, YOU'VE BEEN CHEATING ON YOUR *MMMS LOYALTY OATH!* --SHOCKED STAN.

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S THE *GHOST* OF MAGNETO WHO'S LEADING THEM--BUT *CEREBRO* CAN TAKE US TO THAT MUTANT MULTITUDE!

THEN LET'S GET *MOVING!* I WANT TO GET TO THE *BOTTOM* OF THIS-- PRONTO!

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LEAVE ME *HERE*--? WHERE'S *BOBBY?* HE PROMISED TO--

UHHH--HE HAD AN IMPORTANT *MISSION*, HIMSELF! BUT *ICEMAN* HERE CAN PROTECT YOU-- TILL BOBBY RETURNS!

UH... OH SURE--*SURE!* I'M AS GOOD A *PROTECTOR* AS BOBBY, ANY TIME!

I HOPE THE GIRL REALLY IS *SAFE* THERE!

WHY *NOT*, SCOTT? SHE'S JUST ONE OF *MANY* WHO WERE INNOCENTLY DRAWN INTO THIS CONSPIRACY!

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, JEAN! BUT I HAVE THIS *WEIRD* --PREMONITION!

THIS IS NO TIME FOR UNREASONED *HUNCHES!* CEREBRO'S JUST PICKED UP A *SIGNAL* --FROM THAT OLD MANSION!

BUT, THAT WAS ONE HUNCH THE X-MEN *SHOULD* HAVE PLAYED...

YOU WERE *RIGHT*, MASTER! THIS *IS* THE HOUSE!

THE ONE THEY CALL ICEMAN IS HERE!

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TAKE HIM *ALIVE!* HE IS *TOO* DANGEROUS --SO LONG AS WE DO NOT POSSESS THE-- *M-11!*

EEEEEEYA!

THAT'S NOT MAGNETO'S *VOICE*--BUT IT'S A GOOD *VICIOUS* SUBSTITUTE!

CRACK!

ONE FROZEN ICE BALL!

--COMING --UP!

AND THE *DEEP FREEZE* FOR THE REST OF YOU *HOT-SHOTS!*

YOU WON'T *THAW* OUT OF THIS TILL NEXT SPRING!

YOU ARE *IMPRESSIVE*, ICEMAN--AGAINST MY *UNDER-LINGS!!*

BUT NOW-- SEE THE FULL AND AWESOME *POWER* OF--

MESMERO!



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--SUCH A...TERRIBLE *PRESSURE* INSIDE MY SKULL--!

LIKE GREAT STREAMS OF *LAVA* ROLLING DOWN AND OVER...MY ENTIRE *BRAIN!*

MY MIND'S STILL *CLEAR*-- BUT I CAN'T *COMMAND* MY BODY!

I CAN SEE EVERYTHING-- AND THINK CLEARLY! BUT THAT'S *ALL!*

EVERY *MUSCLE*-- TOTALLY PARALYZED! THAT GUY *MESMERO* IS *NEARLY* AS POWERFUL AS *MAGNETO!*

THIS IS BUT A *SMALL* SAMPLE OF THE TOTAL POWER THAT WE SHALL WIELD-- SOON! WHEN THE *M-11 WEAPON* IS OURS!

WHAT'S THAT *M-11* THING? HE MENTIONED IT *BEFORE!*

BUT WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH *ME*-- OR THE *X-MEN?* ICE-MAN! *DO* SOMETHING! HE'LL *KILL* US BOTH!

*EEEYA!*

*EEEW*

AS FOR THE *GIRL*--

STAY *AWAY* FROM ME! *PLEASE!* DON'T *TOUCH* ME! I COULDN'T *STAND* IT!

--YOUR FEAR IS *UNCALLED FOR,* WOMAN! FOR YOU *MISJUDGE* OUR INTENT!

ICEMAN-- *DO* SOMETHING! *HELP ME!*

I WOULDN'T KNOW *WHAT* TO DO--EVEN IF I *COULD* MOVE A MUSCLE! LOOKS LIKE I'M *THRU!*

YOU ARE NOT OUR *ENEMY*-- NOR ARE WE YOURS!

WE COME, NOT TO *HARM* YOU--BUT TO-- *WORSHIP YOU!*

NEXT: THE *TRUTH* ABOUT *LORNA DANE!*

# THE ORIGINS OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN!™

# "A BEAST IS BORN"

THAT *NUCLEAR PILE* IS GETTING READY TO *BLOW!*

IF I CAN'T LOWER THESE RODS IN TIME, THE WHOLE AREA IS *DOOMED--!*

GREAT EVENTS HAVE *MANY* SEEDS! WHAT WERE THE EARLIEST ROOTS OF *HANK McCOY*, THE FANTASTIC YOUNG MAN WHO WOULD ONE DAY BE CALLED...THE *BEAST?* ONE SUCH SEED WAS BURIED *HERE*, IN AN *ATOMIC ENERGY PLANT*, AS HIS FATHER WRESTLES AGAINST DESTINY'S WRATH....!

MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE *BESTIAL ENERGIES* AND *ANIMAL ARTISTRIES* OF

**STAN LEE**...PRODUCER

**ARNOLD DRAKE**...WRITER
**WERNER ROTH**...ARTIST

**JOHN VERPOORTEN**...INKER
**I. WATANABE**...LETTERER

BUT, THE VERY BEGINNINGS SAW A HAPPIER DAY--THE DAY *NORTON McCOY* MARRIED *EDNA ANDREWS*...

SAVE THE *RICE*, EDNA, IT MAY BE ALL THAT CHEAPSKATE PROVIDES!

SOME *FRIEND* YOU HAVE THERE, NORTON!

*MY* FRIEND? I THOUGHT HE CAME WITH *YOU!*

JUST MARRIED

HERE IT IS, HONEY-- OUR NEW *HOME!*

BUT NORTON, IT'S SO *DESOLATE!*

GIVE IT A *CHANCE*, EDNA! IT'S A NEW TOWN, BUILT *JUST* FOR THAT *PLANT* I'LL BE WORKING IN!

THIS IS WHAT *REALLY* FRIGHTENS ME! ATOMIC WORK IS SO DANGEROUS--!

HONEY, THIS IS FOR *PEACEFUL* PURPOSES! WE'RE NOT MAKING-- *BOMBS!*

ATOMIC ENERGY PLANT

NO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS

EVEN *SO*, THEY SAY IT'S *DEADLY* MATERIAL!

SKIP IT! THE PLANT HAS *ALL KINDS* OF SAFETY DEVICES! ANYWAY--*WELCOME HOME*, MRS. McCOY!

I--I--I *HOPE* YOU'RE RIGHT, MR. McCOY!

I *KNOW* I AM, MRS. M..!

BUT, HANK'S DAD-TO-BE WAS JUST *WHISTLING IN THE DARK!* AND SHORTLY AFTER THAT, A WHISTLE *ECHOED* TERRIFYINGLY...

MR. MARLIN--*TROUBLE* IN *SECTION-B!*

IS IT--IS IT THE *BREEDER REACTOR?*

PLANT DIRECTOR

PAUL A. MARLIN

YES, SIR! SHE'S GONE *WILD!*

HOW *LONG* HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON, JOHN?

*TOO* LONG, SIR! I'VE BEEN TRYING TO LOWER THE *CARBON RODS* TO *QUIET* THE *PILE*--BUT THERE'S A *SHORT!*

NORTON! QUICK! GET ME THE *CHIEF ELECTRICAL ENGINEER!*

DANGER

AND CLEAR THE CREW FROM THE *B-R OBSERVATION DECK!*

YES, SIR! THE RADIO-ACTIVITY MUST BE PILING UP IN THERE ALREADY!

RIGHT! WE'LL WITHHOLD A GENERAL PUBLIC WARNING FOR TWENTY MINUTES MORE TO AVOID *PANIC!*

*SORRY,* SIR! THE SHORT CIRCUIT *ISN'T* ON THE SURFACE!

IT COULD TAKE *SEVERAL HOURS* TO TRACE IT!

*NO GOOD!* WE'LL HAVE TO SEND SOMEONE *BACK* INTO THE OBSERVATION DECK TO LOWER THE RODS MANUALLY!

YOU WON'T FIND TOO MANY *VOLUNTEERS* FOR THAT JOB, SIR!

YOU WON'T *NEED* TO! *I'M* IN THERE *NOW!*

*McCOY!* GET OUT OF THERE! THAT SUIT ISN'T TOTALLY *RADIATION-PROOF!*

IF IT WERE, YOU'D *NEVER* BE ABLE TO *MOVE* IN IT!

THEN I GUESS WE BETTER GET *STARTED* SIR! SOONEST *DONE,* SOONEST *HOME!*

ALRIGHT, YOU *WIN,* YOU SON-OF-A-GUN! START LOWERING THE CONTROL RODS!

BUT SLOWLY, MAN--*SLOWLY!* IF YOU *SMASH* THEM, WE'RE *ALL* DONE FOR!

DON'T WORRY, SIR--I'LL LAY 'EM DOWN AS *GENTLY* AS THE *TOP* FLOOR ON A *HOUSE OF CARDS!*

BUT, NORTON McCOY WAS HANDLING SOMETHING A *BIT* HEAVIER THAN A CARD HOUSE...

GETTING HARDER AND HARDER TO KEEP THIS WHEEL FROM FLYING *OUT OF CONTROL*--BUT...

# CRRRACKLE!

...I'VE GOT TO, OTHERWISE THE *C-RODS* WILL *CRASH!!*

HE--HE'S ALMOST *DONE* IT, SIR! BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH *LONGER* HE CAN *TAKE* THAT STRAIN!

AND, THE *RADIO ENERGY* IS POURING INTO THE OBSERVATION DECK NOW! IF WE DON'T GET HIM OUT OF THERE SOON--HE'LL BE *FRIED* TO A CRISP--!

JUST THEN--

HE'S *DONE* IT! HE'S *DONE* IT!

*HURRY!* GET THAT MAN OUT OF THERE! WE DON'T WANT A *DEAD HERO!*

;UGGGGGH!;

MAN, THEY DON'T MAKE MEDALS *BIG* ENOUGH FOR A GUY LIKE THIS!

YEAH? HOW ABOUT MAYBE HE FIGURED THERE'D BE LOTS OF *HEADLINES* AND *CASH* IN IT FOR HIM?

GUYS WHO STOP LONG ENOUGH TO FIGURE *THAT* NEVER HAVE *TIME* TO DO *THIS!*

QUIT YOUR WORRYIN', EDNA! THE DOC SAYS I'LL BE *FINE*-- BACK TO WORK IN A FEW MONTHS!

NOT AT *THAT* PLANT YOU WON'T BE, NORTON! YOU'LL EITHER FIND YOURSELF A NEW *JOB* OR A NEW *WIFE!*

YOU STRIKE A *HARD* BARGAIN, MRS. McCOY!

ONLY WHEN I'M DEALIN' WITH A HARD *HEAD*, MR. McCOY!

AND SO, THEY FOUND A NEW TOWN AND A NEW JOB AND...

IT'S *TRUE*, NORTON! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A BABY!

*MARVELOUS!* BEST NEWS OF THE *CENTURY!* RIGHT, DOC?

UH...I--I'M NOT SO *SURE!* YOU SEE, THERE'S *ONE* PROBLEM...

YOUR *EXPOSURE TO RADIOACTIVITY* COULD HAVE A *STRANGE* GENETIC CONSEQUENCE! THAT IS...

...THE CHILD MIGHT *NOT* BE ...*NORMAL!*

OHHHH! HOW *TERRIBLE!*

EASY, EDNA! NO POINT IN CRYING! AFTER ALL, THE KID MIGHT BE *BETTER* THAN NORMAL!

THE BOY SEEMS QUITE *ORDINARY,* DOCTOR! *EXCEPT* FOR...

...THESE EXTRAORDINARY HANDS AND FEET! YES, THEY'RE DEVELOPED *FAR* BEYOND THOSE OF A *NEWBORN* CHILD!

I WONDER WHAT *ELSE* TIME WILL TELL US ABOUT HIM!

LOOK AT THE LITTLE DEVIL! FANTASTIC THE WAY HE USES THOSE BIG FEET!

I DON'T THINK HE LIKES THAT SORT OF THING UNCLE BOB!

*COOCHY-KITCHY-COO!*

*NONSENSE!* ALL KIDS LIKE *COOCHY-KITCHY-COO!*

WHOOPP!

:OWWWWF!:

FANTASTIC! THAT KID WILL BE THE NEXT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION *AND* LEADING FIELDGOAL KICKER-- *BOTH!*

*COULD BE... COULD BE!*

BUT, HE'S DESTINED TO BE A *LOT* MORE THAN THAT-- AND YOU'LL WANNA BE ON HAND WHEN HANK BEGINS TO FIND OUT JUST *WHAT* HE IS--*NEXT ISH,* PILGRIM!